



JACK DOYLE

MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**For Immediate Release:
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DOYLE ANNOUNCES IMPROVEMENTS IN H&HS CLIENT SERVICE

Over 94% of Medicaid Applications Processed Within 45 Days

County Executive Jack Doyle today announced the ongoing reforms within the Department of Human and Health Services (H&HS) are drastically reducing the time it takes for qualified applicants to receive assistance. All potential clients are now interviewed within 5 days of applying for public assistance, and 94.5% of applicants receive a determination of eligibility for Medicaid within government timeframes.

“These numbers show that we’re delivering on our commitment to improve client service,” said Doyle. “By conducting interviews and processing applications promptly we’re ensuring that those in need receive help in reaching self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.”

Monroe County’s H&HS implemented a new application, or intake, process in January. This new process centralizes applications for all financial programs such as Temporary Assistance, Medicaid, Day Care and Food Stamps. Prior to this, applicants would have to fill out multiple applications and participate in separate interviews for each program.

State and Federal regulations mandate that applicants must be seen within 5 days for temporary assistance and 10 days for Medicaid. During 2002 the average wait for Temporary Assistance was 5 days and Medicaid was 10.25 days. Since January of 2003 the Department has seen applicants for all programs within an average of 5 days.

Due to federal law, decisions on applications must be made 45 days for Medicaid cases. In the past, the volume of applications for Medicaid delayed the processing time and the department was only able to complete 80.5% by the federal deadline. The new application process has allowed H&HS to determine the eligibility of 94.5% of the applicants within 45 days – far exceeding the standards set by the federal government.

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“We’ve actually had outside providers ask us to slow down,” said Doyle. “Many advocacy groups and others doubted our ability to overhaul an inefficient system that was decades old. The proof is in the numbers, and our clients and the community are receiving better service than ever before. I want to congratulate our H&HS employees for their success in making these improvements a reality.”

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